



In the matter of:)	Docket No. 12-HERS-01
)	
Regulation of Home Energy Rating)	Staff Webinar
Programs for Residential Dwellings)	RE: Whole-House Home Energy
)	Rating
)	

Notice of Staff Webinar to Improve the California Whole-House Home Energy Rating System

California Energy Commission staff will conduct a webinar to obtain information from stakeholders interested in improving the California Whole-House Home Energy Rating System. In late 2012, the Commission opened the Home Energy Rating System (HERS) Order Instituting Informational (OII) Proceeding, Order No. 12-1114-6, to identify potential procedures and other actions to improve the HERS program. Information gathered through the OII process will eventually lead to a rulemaking specific to the Whole-House Home Energy Rating System.

In August 2009, the Commission adopted revised California HERS regulations and the HERS Technical Manual¹ to include Whole-House Home Energy Ratings in the HERS program². Within the Whole-House Home Energy Rating System, a home is rated on a scale from 0 to 250 to show its efficiency relative to a reference home built to meet the 2008 Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards.

The webinar will be held on:

Wednesday, June 17, 2015

1 p.m. to 4 p.m. (Pacific)

Remote Access Available by Computer or Phone via WebEx™
Instructions below

Background

Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 25942³ directs the Energy Commission to establish criteria for a statewide HERS program. In 2009, the Energy Commission revised the HERS regulations to include and implement Whole-House Home Energy Ratings consistent with the following criteria in the Public Resources Code, Section 25942:

¹ California Energy Commission, *HERS Technical Manual*, <http://www.energy.ca.gov/2008publications/CEC-400-2008-012/CEC-400-2008-012-CMF.PDF>.

² The HERS program was originally established to provide only Field Verification and Diagnostic Testing.

³ Warren-Alquist Act (Public Resources Code section 25000 et seq.) http://www.energy.ca.gov/reports/Warren-Alquist_Act/.

- Consistent, accurate, and uniform ratings based on a single statewide rating scale.
- Reasonable estimates of utility bill savings, and reliable recommendations on cost-effective measures to improve energy efficiency.
- Labeling procedures that will meet the needs of home buyers, homeowners, renters, the real estate industry, and mortgage lenders with an interest in Home Energy Ratings.
- Proposed approaches for determining cost-effectiveness and recommendations for energy efficiency improvements, including cross checking against utility bills.

The California Whole-House Home Energy Rating establishes a “dual-path” approach to providing ratings in the state:

- Under the “Independent Rater” path, the rater must be independent from any firm or person who performs upgrade work on the home. The rating procedures require a rater to recommend a list of upgrades for the home. The homeowner can work with contracting firms to make upgrades recommended by the rater, or possibly other upgrades recommended by the contractor. The rater must come back to verify the installation after upgrades are performed, and provide a post-upgrade rating.
- Under the Building Performance Contractor (BPC) path, a Whole-House Rating can be integrated with the upgrade project and completed by an employee of the contracting firm installing the upgrades. The BPC rater and the BPC contractor firm that employs the BPC rater are subject to additional requirements to ensure consistent quality installation for all of the firm’s projects. When a BPC is conducting a project, a third party rater is not required.

Purpose and Agenda

The purpose of this webinar is to solicit stakeholder input and discuss methods to improve California’s Whole-House Home Energy Rating System. HERS rating software is used to calculate the California HERS Index, generate recommendations on how to improve the energy performance of the rated home, and analyze customers’ utility bills. To date, staff has explored and identified the following areas to potentially improve and clarify the technical manual requirements for HERS software, providers, and procedures:

- 1. Uniform Energy Asset Ratings to Compare Building Properties.** Currently, identical homes have different HERS scores depending on whether you use Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) or California HERS. This is because the RESNET HERS score and the California HERS score use a different reference home. The California Whole-House Home Energy Rating is an energy asset rating, which rates the energy efficiency of a home’s energy assets

(its equipment, design, and construction). It is not a rating of the energy used by the occupants of the home as reported on energy bills, which will be referred to as a building performance assessment. To accomplish alignment between California HERS and national programs, the Energy Commission is considering the use of the RESNET reference home (based on the 2006 International Energy Conservation Code). Currently, the California HERS reference home is the standard design home specification of the 2008 Residential Alternative Calculation Method (ACM) Approval Manual⁴. At least initially, the expectation is that asset ratings will primarily remain in the domain of new construction.

2. Consider alternative asset rating approaches for existing buildings.

It is imperative that a standardized asset rating approach limits transaction costs and does not place excessive requirements on builders or homeowners selecting such ratings. Currently, Public Resource Code, Section 25942(5)(c)⁵ requires that once a statewide rating system is in place, no home energy rating services may be performed in the state unless those services have been certified by the Energy Commission to be in compliance with the statewide system. An alternative asset rating approach will be explored with the goal of establishing methods to affordably rate the comparative value of building energy efficiency. As stated in Strategy 1.4 of the 2015 Draft EBEE Action Plan, the expectation for existing homes is that there will be a market for assessments, providing information to the current occupant. The Energy Commission is exploring the option of having the state set minimum performance criteria while allowing many service providers with many models.

3. Establish minimum standards for Building Performance Assessment Tools.

Currently, the California HERS regulations dictate specific software to be used for whole-house home energy ratings. Changing the regulations to allow for multiple performance assessment approaches when energy consulting services to homeowners will increase the penetration and relevance of modern assessment tools, while ensuring that minimum performance thresholds are met. As explained in Strategy 1.3 of the 2015 Draft Existing Buildings Energy Efficiency (EBEE) Action Plan⁶, the idea is to open the market for assessments well beyond HERS raters. The energy assessment is intended to provide a homeowner with a detailed understanding of their current energy usage and to inform energy efficiency upgrade opportunities. This service may be provided by the energy industry with appropriate guidance by the HERS regulations. These efforts will place the state in the role of limited oversight, rather than as a developer of residential energy assessment tools.

⁴ California Energy Commission, *2008 Residential Alternative Calculation Method (ACM) Approval Manual*, <http://www.energy.ca.gov/2008publications/CEC-400-2008-002/CEC-400-2008-002-CMF.PDF>.

⁵ Warren-Alquist Act (Public Resources Code section 25000 et seq.) http://www.energy.ca.gov/reports/Warren-Alquist_Act/.

⁶ California Energy Commission, *Draft Existing Building Energy Efficiency (EBEE) Action Plan*, http://docketpublic.energy.ca.gov/PublicDocuments/15-IEPR-05/TN203806_20150310T093903_California%E2%80%99s_Existing_Buildings_Energy_Efficiency_Action_Plan.pdf.

Public Comment

Oral comments. Staff will accept oral comments during the webinar. Comments may be limited to three minutes per speaker. Any comments may become part of the public record in this proceeding.

Written comments. Written comments should be submitted to the Dockets Unit. For additional information, see Standing Order re: Proceedings and Confidentiality Procedural Requirements for Filing, Service, and Docketing Documents with the Energy Commission, available at: www.energy.ca.gov/commission/chief_counsel/docket.html. Additionally, written comments may be posted to the Energy Commission's website for the proceeding. Please note that your written and oral comments, attachments, and associated contact information (e.g., your address, phone, and email) become part of the viewable public record. This information may become available via Google, Yahoo, and any other search engines.

The Energy Commission encourages comments by e-mail. Please include your name and any organization name. Comments should be in a downloadable, searchable format such as Microsoft® Word (.doc) or Adobe® Acrobat® (.pdf). Please include the docket number **12-HERS-01** and indicate **Whole-House Home Energy Rating OII** in the subject line. Send comments to:

docket@energy.ca.gov

If you prefer, you may send a paper copy of your comments to:

California Energy Commission
Dockets Office, MS-4
Re: Docket No. 12-HERS-01
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

Public Adviser and Other Commission Contacts

The Energy Commission's Public Adviser's Office provides the public assistance in participating in Energy Commission proceedings. If you want information on how to participate in this forum, please contact the Public Adviser, Alana Mathews, at PublicAdviser@energy.ca.gov or (916) 654-4489 or toll free at (800) 822-6228.

If you have a disability and require assistance to participate, please contact Lou Quiroz at lquiroz@energy.ca.gov or (916) 654-5146 at least five days in advance.

Media inquiries should be sent to the Media and Public Communications Office at mediaoffice@energy.ca.gov or (916) 654-4989.

If you have questions on the subject matter of this Whole-House Home Energy Rating webinar, please contact Courtney Ward at Courtney.Ward@energy.ca.gov or (916) 654-4976.

Remote Attendance

You may participate in this webinar through WebEx, the Energy Commission's online meeting service. Presentations will appear on your computer screen, and you may listen to audio via your computer or telephone. Please be aware that the webinar may be recorded.

To join a meeting:

VIA COMPUTER: Go to <https://energy.webex.com> and enter the unique meeting number: 928 219 047. When prompted, enter your name and the following meeting password: meeting@1

The “Join Conference” menu will offer you a choice of audio connections:

1. To call into the meeting: Select "I will call in" and follow the on-screen directions.
2. International Attendees: Click on the "Global call-in number" link.
3. To have WebEx call you: Enter your phone number and click "Call Me."
4. To listen over the computer: If you have a broadband connection, and a headset or a computer microphone and speakers, you may use VoIP (Internet audio) by going to the Audio menu, clicking on “Use Computer Headset,” then “Call Using Computer.”

VIA TELEPHONE ONLY (no visual presentation): Call 1-866-469-3239 (toll-free in the U.S. and Canada). When prompted, enter the unique meeting number: 928 219 047. International callers may select their number from <https://energy.webex.com/energy/globalcallin.php>.

VIA MOBILE ACCESS: Access to WebEx meetings is now available from your mobile device. To download an app, go to www.webex.com/overview/mobile-meetings.html.

If you have difficulty joining the meeting, please call the WebEx Technical Support number at 1-866-229-3239.

Availability of Documents

Documents and presentations for this meeting will be available online at: <http://www.energy.ca.gov/HERS/12-HERS-01/documents/>.

May 7, 2015

Dave Ashuckian, P.E.
Deputy Director, Efficiency Division

Mail Lists:
Building Standards
Efficiency
Existing Buildings